

# THE CHAMPION

VOL. 12

ARCADIA, FLORIDA, OCTOBER 4, 1906.

No. 40

## TOUCH OF WAR

### CUBA FOLKS TELL SOME OF THEIR EXPERIENCES

MARTIN LOPEZ, Sept. 18, 1906.

AR CADIAN: We have a taste of the war at close hand. Dan and I got back from Spiritus Saturday night, Sunday morning about 11 o'clock. We heard firing to the west. In a few minutes we were that it was coming closer. In a very short time the bullets were whizzing over the heads and one struck the ground a few feet from where Dan stood. By this time they were up at the north corral, a half mile across the lake, soon after the firing stopped. There were more than a thousand fired mostly from maulers, but occasionally a shot of any caliber. During the shooting the cattle in the pasture across the lake stampeded and came running down the lake as fast as they could go, and we thought for a few minutes that they could go, and thought for a few minutes that they might be killing cattle just to destroy property, but soon abandoned that idea, as there were many shots fired we knew they did not find them so fast as they were shooting.

In a little while I told Dan I was going over to see what it was about and when I was saddling I put a bottle of water, one of my maulers and a lot of old linen and things into the saddle bags as we had every reason to suppose we would find somebody wounded. I don't find a man or horse, but I found one hat, several mauler blankets, a shirt and a piece of a halter and a hammock. The worst of all I found our mauler fence cut in about ten places. (It took about all day yesterday to mend it.)

After I came back Dan and I thought we would go right over to mend the fence. On our return when we got back on this side of the lake we saw two men near the house and the dogs standing there. When they saw us they started down the lake with their maulers pointed at us, but I waved my hat at them and we rode up to them and Dan told them to come over to the house and have some coffee. They asked him if he was loco. He said the house was too much exposed for their use and wanted to know where there was a house in the brush where they could get shelter. There were two more of them at the foot of the lake and they had lost their hats and horses in the fight but still had their guns and machetes. Dan showed them the road out.

The next day, before sun up, four more rode in here on horse back asking for the road to the railroad but they didn't parley long. We soon heard that there was a lot more of them around who had lost their horses and Dan staid home to see that they didn't ride off ours. While I went and mended the fence.

This morning I struck out and followed the trail of the war, mended Garcia's fence in several places where they had cut it, to keep his herd of big bulls from getting out. Then I went on to Don Augustine Gomez's where the

fight began. There were about 100 or more insurgents stopped at the house, and the government forces from Moron and Ciego de Avila were trailing them up and overtook them there. There were about 200 soldiers and rural guards. They immediately opened fire. A lot of the insurgents were in the house, and they (rurals) shot the house full of holes. The family ran out into the field and got into an arroyo, and the bullets just whistled over them. They had two calves killed by accident. Some of the men got their horses and skinned out across Garcia's pasture and the troops after them in full chase. As they didn't know the country when they got to our corral on the bank of the lake they thought they were to the end of the road and most of them being hard pressed abandoned their horses and took to the brush on foot. A part of the force broke for the woods on foot at first alarm. So the soldiers captured about 100 horses and saddles. I heard that they killed two before they got to Gomez's place and left them where they fell for the buzzards. The government forces left yesterday p. m. and we haven't seen or heard of any war around here today. So on the whole we feel that we got out of it pretty easily. Only two of the soldiers were hurt so far as I heard, one with a bullet in the shoulder and the other with a machete cut on the hand. Of course we are anxious to know how things are going in other places, but it may be some days before we hear.

D. W. CHILD.

Later: Things have settled down quietly about here since I last wrote, though we hear that some of the insectos made their way over to Palma, a country store between here and Sancti Spiritus, where they began to steal horses and recruit. Don Simon Reges is a colonel who distinguished himself in the last war as a dashing, daring cavalry man and an intrepid leader. He has some of his old command with him and they will make it hot for any insectos they come across. They reported having captured 93 horses and equipments and 24 guns, five horses dead.

Either Dan or I have staid home to look after things since the battle, thinking if the stragglers came around it would be better to entertain them than have them help themselves.

It has been raining all day slowly, and is at it a little harder tonight. The equinox I suppose. Dan will probably go to Jibaro tomorrow if the rain lets up for news and to mail some letters. We hear that the U. S. is likely to intervene. Hope they will do so soon for things are already badly disorganized. Of course we haven't been able to do any thing but chores this week and look after the young calves. Dan was around among the neighbors some one day and found them badly scared. If they let us and our stock alone they will find us quite peaceable. We keep well and haven't lost any sleep about it so far.

D. W. C.

Tampa expects to see lively times until the U. S. troops are landed in Cuba, as many of them will go by way of that city, as will also the camp supplies and horses. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good."

## THE AMENDMENT

### REGARDING DRAINAGE. J. C. PELOT'S VIEWS

In accordance with your request for my views upon the amendment to Article XVI of the Constitution of Florida, known as the drainage amendment, which constitutes the governor, attorney general, secretary of treasury, secretary of agriculture and comptroller, a board of drainage commissioners, I have to say that I am in favor of anything which in my judgment will add to the prosperity of Florida, and the adoption of this amendment will, in my opinion, do this.

Considering all the arguments and styles of argument in opposition to Governor Broward's scheme of drainage, there are certain facts which remain:

First. Florida has large areas of submerged lands in the lower portion of the state now practically worthless that could be made very valuable. I do not think anybody denies this proposition.

Second. That these lands can be drained is, I think, another proposition that is settled, and not only can these lands be drained, but by making an outlet for the waters of Lake Okeechobee large areas of fertile lands along the Caloosahatchee and elsewhere that are now subject to overflow, can be made available, and lands that are now worth not over twenty-five cents an acre, will be worth all the way from ten to one hundred dollars per acre. I do not think anybody will dispute this.

We have millions of acres of land owned both by state and individuals that ought to be drained; that can be drained, and that will be increased in value several thousand per cent. above the cost of drainage; and I am sure that a correct reading of the Article will show that outside of the drainage districts it will not cost the people of the state one cent. This is also coupled with a fairly established fact that a large majority of the people owning lands in the drainage districts favor the draining proposition.

If this is so, why should not the lands be drained? Because it is said by opposers that the amendment confers autocratic powers. Well, may be, so far as relates to their power to define the districts to be drained, and a selection of the mode of drainage. How could it be done otherwise? And how could the lands ever be drained? Nobody seems to have a better plan.

The commissioners designated by the amendment are to be elected every four years and are composed of the highest officials of the state, men for whom the people of the state have expressed, and will express, their confidence, and will therefore be directly responsible to the people. And if they, or any of them, should abuse their power they can be impeached. We have also courts of law that are supposed to look into the rights of the people. This claim, therefore, of too much power being given to the commissioners seems to be very much of the nature of a scarecrow.

I shall vote for the amendment because I believe it will not only be for the benefit of the state, but for the people.—J. C. Pelot in Braidenton Herald.

#### Constitutional Amendment.

##### ARTICLE XXVIII.

That the following amendment to Article XVI of the Constitution

of the State of Florida be and it is hereby agreed to and shall be submitted to the electors of the state at the general election, to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. A. D., for ratification or rejection:

Section 32. The governor, the comptroller, the state treasurer, the attorney general and the commissioner of agriculture of the state of Florida and their successors in office are hereby constituted and designated as a board of drainage commissioners, and are hereby authorized and empowered to establish a system of drainage canals, drains, levees, dikes and reservoirs of such dimensions and depths, as in the judgment of the said board of drainage commissioners is deemed advisable to drain and reclaim the swamp and overflowed lands within the State of Florida, or such parts or portions thereof as is deemed best by said board of drainage commissioners from time to time, and to provide for the irrigation of the lands reclaimed, and to maintain such canals, drains, levees, dikes and reservoirs in such manner as will be most advantageous to the territory so drained, the State of Florida, its inhabitants and commerce thereof.

Section 33. That the board of drainage commissioners are hereby authorized and empowered to establish drainage districts and fix the boundaries thereof in the state of Florida. That the board of drainage commissioners be and it is authorized and empowered to prepare a list or lists of all the alluvial or swamp and overflow taxable lands within such drainage district or districts, and levy thereon an acreage tax not exceeding ten cents per annum to be fixed annually by said board of drainage commissioners, and the various tax assessors of the various counties embraced in part or in whole within such drainage district or districts shall receive such list or lists and enter the same upon the tax rolls of the county or counties in which said lands may lie and the amount so levied by the board of drainage commissioners in such manner and form as may be prescribed by the board of drainage commissioners from time to time, which amounts shall be collected by the various tax collectors of the counties wherein such levies have been made as other taxes are collected, in accordance with law, and pay over said amounts collected to the board of drainage commissioners, said commissioners shall have a lien superior to all other liens upon the taxable lands in any such drainage districts to be enforced by tax levy, for the cost of any work done under the provisions hereof, or done, prior to the adoption of this amendment, under the provisions of an act of the legislature passed in 1905.

Section 34. That the board of drainage commissioners be and it is authorized to exercise the right of eminent domain in the condemnation of land for the location of its canals, drains, levees, dikes and reservoirs for the purposes aforesaid and may enter upon, take and use such land as it may, pending condemnation proceedings, deem necessary for such purposes, and in ascertaining the compensation to be paid for such land or right of way, benefits to be

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## COMMISSIONERS

### MINUTES OF OCTOBER MEETING. NO APPROPRIATION

The Honorable Board of County Commissioners of DeSoto county, met in their office in Arcadia, Fla., Oct. 1st, 1906. Present: Wm. King, chairman, D. W. Brown, N. C. Larsen and E. F. Bostick.

Minutes of last meeting read and approved.

The county Judge and Tax Collector filed their report of licenses as follows:

State.....	\$24 00
County.....	12 00

Total.....\$36 00

The county officers filed their respective reports.

Hon. F. M. Cooper, Tax Assessor, delivered to the Board the Tax Books for 1906. The members of the Board present signed same according to law.

Notary Public bond of Cornelius Crews with J. H. Brown and I. F. Wadsworth, as sureties approved by the Board.

Application for pension presented by Charles A. Forrester examined and approved by the Board.

Notary Bond of A. M. Smith with J. H. Treanwell and J. J. Heard as sureties, approved by the Board.

A petition was received from the citizens of Crewsville, asking for a road from B. M. Waldron's place to Arbuckle Creek. Road granted and the following blazers appointed: B. M. Waldron, J. B. Crews and J. B. Hudson. Appointment sent to J. B. Hudson, Crewsville, Fla.

Stephen Cauwhren was allowed \$5 on petition and doctor's certificate.

The treasurer is hereby authorized to transfer \$62.85 from No. 6 to No. 4 road account.

Chairman Wm. King is authorized to order 26 non-stuffable ballot boxes for DeSoto county.

The clerk is hereby instructed to ascertain the cost of rebinding old tax books and report at next regular meeting.

#### NO FAIR APPROPRIATION.

The Board examined the petitions from the various precincts of the county regarding the appropriation for the State Fair at Tampa and found that there were 379 votes for it and 451 against it. Therefore no appropriation was made.

Commissioner D. W. Brown is hereby authorized to sell the oranges on the county farm to the best advantage.

No objections having been filed against the following described road the same is hereby declared a public road: Commencing at the nw corner of sec 7 tp 33 S R 25 E, running south on section line dividing secs 4 and 5 to public road running west from Bowling Green.

There being no objections filed against the following described road the same is hereby declared a public road: From Troublesome Creek bridge to the bridge west of W. J. Altman's on Lily and Zolfo road.

The committee appointed to examine the county offices report that they find the same in good condition.

The Tax Collector presented his books etc. for final settlement of taxes of 1905, which were accepted and signed by the Board.

There being no further business the Board adjourned to meet Wednesday Oct. 17th 1906 for the purpose of revising the registration etc.